

# DOMINANTS



HEIN VAN DE GEYN

G



# Dominant Chords

**Hein Van de Geyn**

Hein Van de Geyn / Forms

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## 1

## The function of dominant chords

Dominant chords are chords that offer a variety of possible additions in their upper structures. It is the essential tritone (diminished fifth/augmented fourth) inside the chord that gives it its harmonic tension. This interval (named “diabolus in musica” many centuries ago) has a lot of inner tension, and in a normal V-situation will consist of 2 leading tones that have a strong desire to go back to the tonic.



- The 9<sup>th</sup> can be regular or flattened. Once there is a  $b9$ , the siamese twin of this note, the  $b10$  can be present\*.

- The 11<sup>th</sup> is either avoided or if desired as a static note, it will have to be raised to a  $\#11$ .

- The 13<sup>th</sup> can be regular or flattened.

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\* I am sorry, but I cannot name a note  $\#9$ , when it is a  $b10$ . The  $B^b$  in  $G7$  is not an  $A^\#$ .

We cannot have two 9<sup>ths</sup> in a chord, we can have a tension of a minor 3<sup>rd</sup> above the chord though.

What is very important to realise is that a  $b9$  can have a regular  $13^{th}$  accompany it; but once the tension of a  $b13$  is present, the  $9^{th}$  has to be altered to a  $b9$  as well. The sound with a  $b13^{th}$  and regular  $9^{th}$  does exist, but the  $b13$  is a  $\#5$  in that case. Somehow there is a hierarchy in the tensions where the  $9^{th}$  is the first one to become altered and the  $13^{th}$  can follow, or not - but not the other way around.

This implies that in fact we can have 3 potential colours for a complete dominant chord:

$9 - \#11 - 13$  I name this WHITE (WHT)



$b9 - \#11 - 13$  I name this OCTATONIC (OCT)



$b9 - \#11 - b13$  I name this ALTERED (ALT)



and the special one:  $9 - \#5$  (AUG)



## Dominant Chords

Don't confuse dominant chords with major chords that have a blue note added to them. You'll find those on the I<sup>st</sup> and IV<sup>th</sup> degree in major and on the IV<sup>th</sup> (more about this chord later) and the VI<sup>th</sup> degree in minor.

blue note added to the normal chord

in ma: I      Ibl.      IV      IVbl.      in mi: VI      VIbl.

These are non-functional dominant chords, and could even be replaced by their normal  $\Delta 7^{\text{th}}$  chords - although this would lead to a dramatic changing of colour, yet not a changing of function.

A special place must be made for the dominant chord on the lowered 7<sup>th</sup> note of the scale. This is a Moll-Dur chord (see the booklet about this); a dominant chord with a subdominant function. The tritone within the chord does not give us two leading tones - only one leading tone is present.

VIIMD      I      or      VIIMD      I

## Dominant Chords

## 2

## Secondary dominants

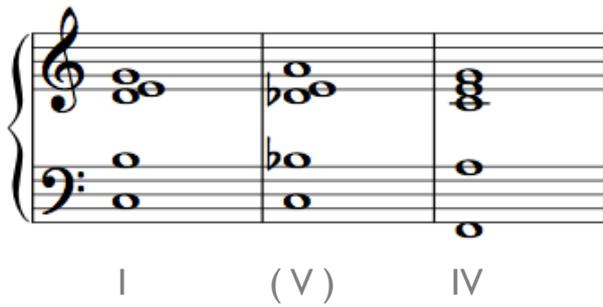
Each chord in a key can be preceded by its own dominant. It is as if the degree sends in his butler to announce him. This is why I call these chords “butler-chords” sometimes. The butler-chord belongs to the tonality of the chord he announces and thus it will be decided by that tonality which extensions to use.

I          (V)          II                  I          (V)          II

$\flat 9$  and  $\flat 13$  - notes from Dmi

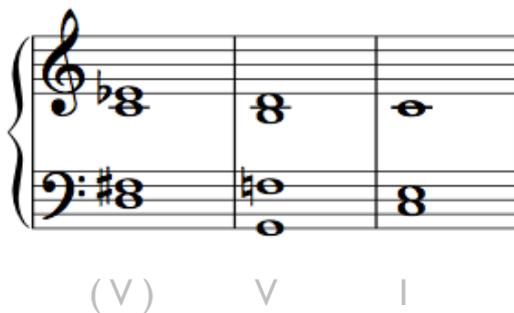
This is less evident if the target is a major chord. Our ears are now completely adjusted to having a  $\flat 9$  in a dominant going to a major chord. It adds that third leading tone. The  $13^{\text{th}}$  likes to remain in the major key, so a secondary dominant toward a major chord will typically be OCT (see chapter 5).

By flattening the  $13^{\text{th}}$  as well, we create extra tension. By not flattening the  $9^{\text{th}}$ , we take some tension away. Both are possible - but in practising situations I like to stick to the OCT ( $\flat 9$  -  $13$ ).



Another special dominant chord is the one on the 2<sup>nd</sup> note of the scale. It would be convenient to quickly say this is the V of V - a secondary dominant to V. When you really listen to the use of this chord in the jazz practice though, this analysis proves to be not correct.

The situation of (V)V would imply that the first dominant chord could have a  $b9$ . And when you play it like that, you can clearly hear that this sounds good, and that the chord functions indeed as the dominant for the V-chord.



Experience though tells us that this chord is often followed by the II chord; a reason more to suspect there is something special about this chord. And in fact we must conclude that the chord is a static chord with no explicit tendencies towards V, built on the second note of the scale. I therefore name it: II-dominant (*IIdom*). This chord is a static chord with a natural 9<sup>th</sup> and a natural 13<sup>th</sup>. It is ruled by the fundamental tonality, not by the 5th degree.

Dominant Chords



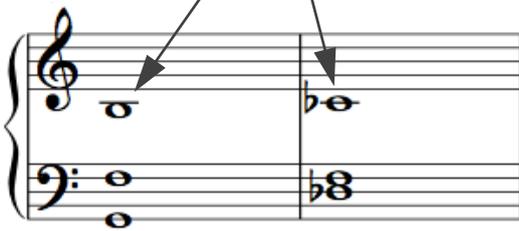
## Dominant Chords

# 3

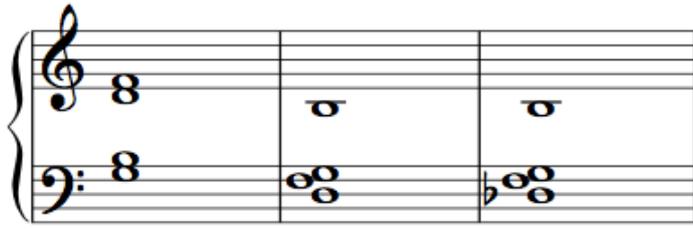
## Tritone Substitutes

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enharmonically equal, but different notes



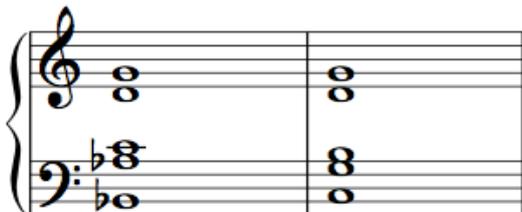
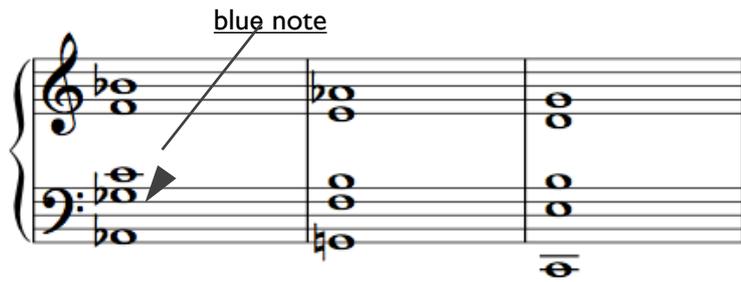
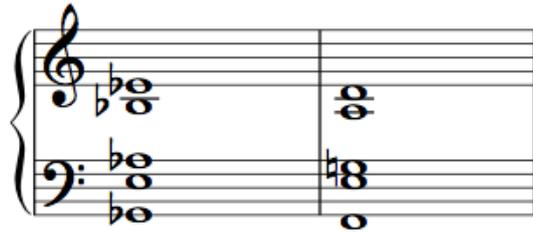
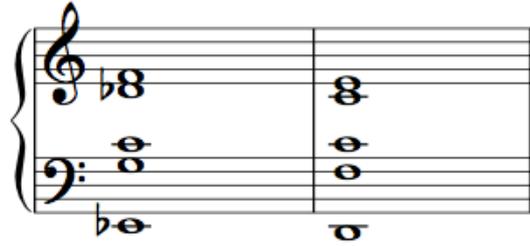
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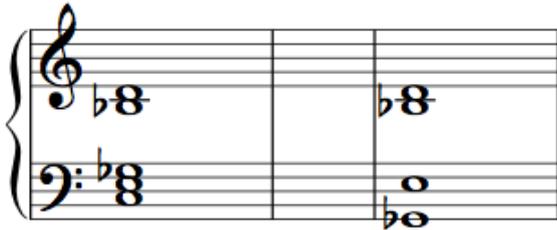
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Dominant Chords



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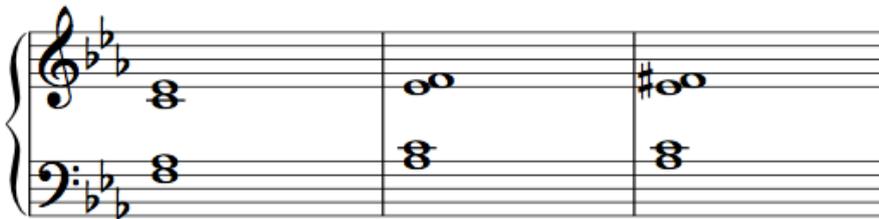


## Dominant Chords

# 4

## The augmented sixth

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Dominant Chords

Musical notation for a dominant chord progression in B-flat major. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The progression consists of four measures. The first measure shows the tonic triad (F2, A2, C3) in the bass and the dominant triad (G2, B2, D3) in the treble. The second measure shows the dominant triad in the treble and the mediant triad (D2, F2, A2) in the bass. The third measure shows the mediant triad in the bass and the submediant triad (E2, G2, B2) in the treble. The fourth measure shows the submediant triad in the treble and the tonic triad in the bass.

$\frac{6}{5}$

Musical notation for a dominant chord progression in D major. The key signature has two sharps (F-sharp and C-sharp). The progression consists of four measures. The first measure shows the tonic triad (D2, F#2, A2) in the bass and the dominant triad (G2, B2, D3) in the treble. The second measure shows the dominant triad in the treble and the mediant triad (F#2, A2, C#3) in the bass. The third measure shows the mediant triad in the bass and the submediant triad (E2, G2, B2) in the treble. The fourth measure shows the submediant triad in the treble and the tonic triad in the bass.

$\frac{6}{5}$

Musical notation for a dominant chord progression in D major. The key signature has two sharps (F-sharp and C-sharp). The progression consists of two measures. The first measure shows the tonic triad (D2, F#2, A2) in the bass and the dominant triad (G2, B2, D3) in the treble. The second measure shows the dominant triad in the treble and the mediant triad (F#2, A2, C#3) in the bass.

Dominant Chords

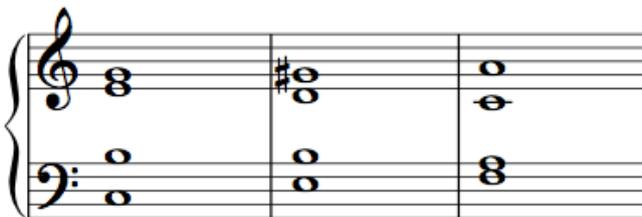


## Dominant Chords

# 5

## In practice

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## Dominant Chords

9  
13  
*b*9  
13  
*b*9  
*b*13

## Dominant Chords

\* This chord might be the most fascinating chord in harmony - in all its simpleness. It is a dominant chord on a subdominant degree with a tonic function. Yes, this chord has a tonic function in a minor key. Just alternate Cmi - F7 and you will feel it. So very different than repeating Cmi - Fmi. which is a real tonic-subdominant movement.

# Dominant Chords

suspension of normal  $b13$

The image shows a musical score for a piano. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G major. The first measure shows a G4 quarter note in the treble, a B4 quarter note in the treble, and a D5 quarter note in the treble. The bass line has a G2 octave bass note, a B2 octave bass note, and a D3 octave bass note. The second measure shows a G4 quarter note in the treble, a B4 quarter note in the treble, and a D5 quarter note in the treble. The bass line has a G2 octave bass note, a B2 octave bass note, and a D3 octave bass note. An arrow points from the text 'suspension of normal b13' to the D5 note in the first measure of the treble line.

Dominant Chords

moving from WHT to ALT

Musical notation showing a transition from a whole triad (WHT) to an altered triad (ALT). The first measure shows a triad with notes G4, B4, and D5. The second measure shows the same triad with a flat added to the third degree, resulting in G4, B4, and Bb5.

moving from sus-9 to OCT

Musical notation showing a transition from a suspended 9th chord (sus-9) to an octaves chord (OCT). The first measure shows a sus-9 chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and G5. The second measure shows the same chord with the G5 note moved to the next octave, resulting in G4, B4, D5, and G6.

suspension of normal b13

b9 as a passing note

Musical notation illustrating suspension of normal b13 and b9 as a passing note. The first measure shows a chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and Bb5. The second measure shows the same chord with the Bb5 note moving to B5. The third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The tenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eleventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twelfth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fourteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The sixteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventeenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The nineteenth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twentieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The twenty-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirtieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The thirty-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fortieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The forty-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fiftieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifty-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifty-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifty-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The fifty-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. 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The sixty-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The seventy-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eightieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-first measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-second measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-third measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-fourth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-fifth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-sixth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-seventh measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-eighth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The eighty-ninth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The ninetieth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5. The hundredth measure shows the chord with notes G4, B4, D5, and B5.



*about the author:*

HEIN VAN DE GEYN (The Netherlands - 1956) has played Jazz professionally ever since he finished his studies at the conservatories of Tilburg and Rotterdam. He lived in the US for several years, working with John Abercrombie, Larry Schneider, Tony Bennett, Larry Vuckovich and many others.

After his return to Europe he has been establishing himself as one of the most sought after bass players in Europe. Hein's playing can be heard on some 100 recordings. He has been the bass player with Philip Catherine since 1985 and recorded 9 CD's with him. In 1987 he toured and recorded in Japan with Chet Baker. Hein was also the bassist on the last concert of Chet Baker in Rotterdam in 1988. This was also the year Hein started to play with, and arrange for Dee Dee Bridgewater, with whom he has been performing at most of the important festivals and stages in Europe (Montreux, Antibes, Vienne, Berlin, Northsea, London ...) as well as in the USA (Carnegie Hall, Village Vanguard, Montreal, Newport Festival...) and Japan (Keystone Corner, Blue Note). After three albums and numerous tours and performances Hein and Dee Dee's paths separated in 1996 since Hein wanted to pursue his own career as a leader and producer.

In July 1990 Hein made the first album under his own name, a duo with Lee Konitz. Several tours followed. In 1994 he created his group BASELINE with John Abercrombie and Joe LaBarbara. This group recorded several albums and toured all over Europe.

1994 was also the year in which Hein co-founded the jazz label Challenge Records, for which he produced a number of successful recordings. Four of them received an Edison (Dutch Grammy) for best Jazz recording of the year.

In 1996 Hein became the head of the bass section in the Jazz department of the royal conservatory in The Hague. In this year he also was awarded the prestigious Prins Bernhard Foundation Music Prize. He received this prize for his importance in the development of European Jazz as well as for his stimulating role as mentor and producer of many young musicians in Holland.

In 1998 Hein received the Bird Award of the Northsea Jazz Festival. In this year he was also elected as "Best European Acoustic Bass Player" by a referendum of the Belgian radios RTBF and VRT.

During a sabbatical period spent in South Africa in 2001/2002 Hein started writing his "Comprehensive Bass Method". This extensive method on bass playing (950 pages) became available in 2007 and is slowly becoming the standard work for the double bass worldwide.

From 2008 to 2010 Hein was the artistic manager of the Rotterdam Jazz Academy and was leading this internationally orientated school with great flair and enthusiasm.

In 2010 Hein decided to basically stop his travelling career as a performing bassist and moved with his family to South Africa to run a guest house, and dedicate his life to writing and education. He is a lecturer at the university of Cape Town (UCT).

Hein has performed with many artists over the years. To name a few: Chet Baker - Freddie Hubbard - Roy Hargrove - Woody Shaw - Kenny Wheeler - Tom Harrell - Nat Adderley - Abbey Lincoln - Meredith d'Ambrosio - Marlana Shaw - Tony Bennett - Mark Murphy - Jack DeJohnette - Ed Thigpen - Joe Labarbera - Elliot Zigmund - Peter Erskine - Idris Muhammad - Billy Hart - John Abercrombie - Tal Farlow - Larry Coryell - Dave Pike - Toots Thielemans - Hank Jones - Tommy Flanagan - Michel Petrucciani - Enrico Pieranunzi - Barry Harris - Horace Silver - Junior Mance - Walter Davis Jr. - Tete Montoliu - Horace Parlan - Jacki Byard - Slide Hampton - Bob Brookmeyer - Joe Lovano - Lee Konitz - Johnny Griffin - Benny Golson - Red Holloway - Charlie Rouse - Bobby Watson - Lew Tabackin - Gary Bartz - Archie Shepp - Rick Margitza - Charlie Mariano...

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